



# The Newsletter

of the National Society for the  
Preservation of Covered Bridges, Inc.

Summer 2012

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*Easley Covered Bridge (01-05-12) in Blount County, Alabama*  
During repairs on February 28, 2012 (top) and with repairs nearly complete in May 2012 (bottom). Photos by Susan Johnson

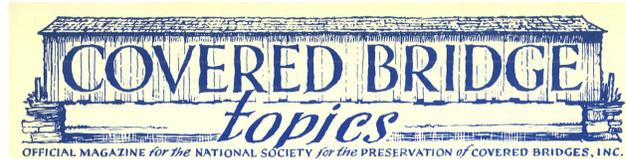
## From the Editor

When I learned that I was to be the editor for the Summer 2012 newsletter, I was, to say the least, surprised. Actually, David said that he and I would prepare it. Those of you who know David know that he is not the most proficient on a computer so the editing and preparation of this document was to be mostly my task. Of course, my initial response was that I already have too many irons in the fire and how could I possibly add this to my workload and pull together a newsletter reasonably close to the original June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. (Although we later chose to wait a few extra days until we had the results of the Bartonsville contract decision.) Within a few days, that initial shock transformed into the excitement of assembling this issue. Given the short notice and lack of experience in this area, I feel that the pieces came together nicely. I want to take this opportunity to thank Brian McKee for volunteering his time to prepare previous newsletters. Many hours go into the preparation of a *Newsletter* and I have nothing but praise for his work. Four times a year, he composed this newsletter with little input from the rest of us and should be commended for that effort. The same goes for his immediate predecessors, Carmela Sciandra and KC Klingensmith.

## 50 years ago - July 1962

On the tenth anniversary of the formation of the Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, the July 1962 issue of *Topics* bore the new masthead that still adorns its cover today. It included an open letter from its designer, noted artist and author Eric Sloane. Sloane started his letter by saying:

*I have been asked to do a drawing for the title of COVERED BRIDGE TOPICS and I have done so. I want, however, to explain why I have featured the wording more than the surrounding art work; this by way of explanation to those who might think that artist Eric Sloane skimmed on his art work, and that "if he'd a mind to" he could have done a little better.*



*I have used the old classic letter instead of "cute and original" letters because I have the greatest reverence for the classic and the traditional, and I have the greatest disregard for the "antique," the cute and the so-called original.*

## Welcome to Our New Members!

New Life Member: Ron Pullman, Carnegie, PA  
 Roger Struanider, Strasburg, VA  
 Danny Fluhart, Waldorf, MD

The Newsletter is published quarterly. It includes current bridge news and information about upcoming events.

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## Fall 2012 Newsletter Deadline

The next Newsletter is scheduled to be mailed in September. Therefore, anyone wishing to submit photos, articles, etc., should send them to the EDITOR by **September 1, 2012**. In order to save us from a lot of re-typing, please send your articles by e-mail or on a CD or DVD, if at all possible. If this isn't possible, then the regular mail will do just fine, as it always has. If you type the information, please use PLAIN WHITE PAPER. If your submissions are extracted from a published newspaper or magazine, or an internet web site, include the source of the information so that we can give proper credit. Send all items to the interim editor, Bill Caswell, 535 Second NH Turnpike, Hillsboro, NH 03244 e-mail [bill@lostbridges.org](mailto:bill@lostbridges.org)

## President's Message

*"Though for no other cause, yet for this; that posterity  
may know we have not loosely through silence permitted  
things to pass away as in a dream, ..."*

Richard Hooker (1554-1600)

Dear Fellow Members, Greetings!

Once again, it is the time of the year when the Covered Bridge visiting season is about to begin in earnest. As I am sure is the case with most of you, I personally have been looking forward to this season all winter long. I have already made many plans, some of which I may even be able to carry out! Be that as it may, and however things ultimately work out, I shall certainly see more Covered Bridges this summer than I did over the course of the past few months.

Time to Renew Your Memberships in the National Society: The beginning of the Covered Bridge visiting season also coincides with another important anniversary; namely, the end of the National Society membership year. Put another way, it is once again time for all of us, or at least for all of us who are not life members, or have not purchased multiple-year memberships, to send in our annual dues. As most of you probably realize, the general fund of the National Society, which supports many of the Society's activities, is dependent upon these dues, and thus, were this general fund not to be replenished on a more or less yearly basis, it would soon become impossible, amongst other things, for the Society to continue printing Topics and the Newsletter. I imagine that most of you, like me, would not relish having to get on without these two publications, even if but briefly. For the sake of Topics and the Newsletter then, I hope that as many of you as can, shall "re-up", as it were, and renew your memberships in the National Society.

Yet there is still another important reason for rejoining the National Society. As I have had occasion to point out before, though the observation is by no means exclusively mine, there is much strength to be had in numbers. In respect to the preservation of Covered Bridges, this strength is unfortunately sometimes needed. One could cite example after example where thanks to strong public support, or as a consequence of the lack of it, a particular Covered Bridge has either been properly repaired and preserved, or seriously damaged by the process which I long ago named "demolition through redesign". The National Society involves itself in these struggles from time to time, in fact, as often as it can. Obviously, the more members the Society has, the more effective, and the more frequent its interventions shall become. So, once again, if your membership is about to expire, please, each and every one of you who can, rejoin the National Society as soon as possible.

Resignation of Brian J. McKee as Editor of the Newsletter: All of us in the National Society owe a large debt of gratitude to Brian J. McKee. For the past several years he has been Editor of the Society's Newsletter. In this capacity, and as I'm sure all of you are well aware, Brian has done a terrific job. After I had seen just a single issue of the Newsletter once management of it had been turned over to him, it was my hope that Brian would be able to stay on at this post for many years to come. Alas, as is often the case for many of us, sometimes "Life" intervenes, and one has to do things one had not originally planned on doing, or the contrary, stop pursuing things one had initially intended to pursue long into the future. Brian has unfortunately found himself in the latter situation. He has been unwilling to scrimp upon the time it takes to put out a quality Newsletter, but because of the press of many other obligations, as for example earning a living, Brian can no longer continue as Editor of this publication. As President of our group, I have therefore reluctantly accepted Brian's resignation from his post, effective immediately. Bill Caswell has graciously taken over the job of editing the Newsletter on an interim basis. I hereby wish publicly, and in the name of the Society, to thank both of these gentlemen: Brian for his outstanding service over the past several years during which time he accurately reported what has been happening to our remaining Historic Covered Wooden Bridges, and Bill, for his willingness on rather short notice to jump into the breach, as it were, and take charge of the Newsletter. Robin Mitchell will begin editing this publication starting with the Winter issue of same, that is to say, with the issue of the Newsletter which is mailed out shortly after the first of the year.

The Bartonville Covered Bridge: As most of you probably know, the original Bartonville Covered Bridge, the one erected by Sanford Granger just after the great flood of 1869, was carried away by hurricane Irene last August. The wreckage of this span, or in any case most of it, washed up on the west bank of the Williams River next to a farmer's field and vineyard about half a mile downstream. What wreckage didn't wash up there, however, passed under the

Worrall Covered Bridge, which span is located approximately a quarter of a mile further downstream, causing quite a bit of damage to the latter structure. A large piece of wreckage that managed somehow to work its way under the Worrall Bridge was in fact one of the portals of the destroyed Bartonville span. This span was discovered intact under a great pile of debris, some of it being remnants of the Bartonville Bridge, and the rest of it being the sort of flotsam and jetsam typically left behind by great and violent inundations.

In respect to the lost Bartonville Covered Bridge, and the still in place Worrall span, the Town of Rockingham has been wise and prudent. Both structures were insured, the Bartonville one for a million dollars, and the Worrall span for a little less. With the addition of funds available from FEMA, plus those the source of which will be the insurance policies the Town of Rockingham carried on its bridges, reconstruction of a structure to replace the lost Bartonville one is not going to be terribly onerous as regards charges imposed upon local taxpayers. The crucial question right after the flood was of course what kind of a replacement bridge would the Selectmen of Rockingham choose to have erected? The Selectmen on that occasion made the right decision: they voted to have a traditional Town Lattice Covered Bridge built as a substitute for the one they had irretrievably lost.

So far so good!

Alas and alack, however; the devil often turns out to have been in the details of a project, this regardless of how noble were the ideals established for it initially.

Put another way, 'So far so good' does not necessarily imply that what has begun well, shall finish well.

In the case of the soon to be begun, reconstruction of the lost Bartonville Bridge, there was ultimately a choice to be made: this choice turned out to be between an ersatz traditional Covered Bridge, and a real one. The Selectmen, all five good men and true, all wanting to do the right thing by the Town and the citizens thereof, took advice, not an unreasonable thing to have done. Unfortunately, the advice they got was wrong, so, rather than voting in favor of a truly traditional span, they voted to have an ersatz one erected instead.

The rather long saga leading up to the above-mentioned decision is too lengthy and too complicated to relate here. Some of the construction details of the ersatz span may be of interest, however, as they will serve to indicate that despite some appearances to the contrary, the new Bartonville Covered Bridge shall be anything but a traditional span built up in a traditional manner.

First of all, the new Bartonville Covered Bridge will hold itself up by means of two Town Lattice Trusses, but Town Lattice Trusses somewhat different from those that held up the lost span. The lattice pieces, for instance, are not to be 4 feet apart on centers, the usual arrangement in this neck of the woods for highway Covered Bridges, but 4 and a half feet apart on centers. The floor joists of the structure are to be glue-laminated timbers, not solid timbers, not wood as the good Lord made it in other words; moreover, these glue-laminated timbers are to be pressure treated with penta, a preservative which is a known carcinogen.

There is more: these glue-laminated floor joists are all to rest upon the inner bottom chords of the span's two trusses; none of these joists is slated to pass in between the lattice pieces and rest upon the outer bottom chords. It must be remembered here that a single, as opposed to a double, Town Lattice Truss is a quite tall and slender structure, one that if not properly braced, is very prone to buckling under load. When live loads pass over the reconstructed Bartonville Covered Bridge, these loads will first be applied to the floor plank of the structure, obviously, whence they will be transferred to the floor joists, whence they will be shunted over to the inner bottom chords of the span. The fact that these loads are to be placed on the inner bottom chords is a potential problem: their presence there will create a tendency of the trusses to twist, a tendency which in the long term, may, or may not, prove serious. This potential problem was of some concern to many of the master bridgewrights of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and is still of concern to the very few master bridgewrights in practice today. So as to avoid this problem, amongst other issues, Jonathan Parker Snow (1848-1933) Bridge Engineer and later Chief Engineer of the Boston and Maine Railroad, hung the floor joists to the Covered Wooden Bridges he designed underneath the bottom chords, rather than having them bear down upon the tops of these members. In Mr. Snow's designs, every other floor joist would be suspended from the inner bottom chords, and every other joist would be suspended from the outer bottom chords, thus equalizing the load as between these two components, and consequently imparting NO tendency to twist to the trusses themselves.

Another aspect of the design selected for the replacement Bartonville Covered Bridge needs to be noted here as well: The floor system of the soon to be erected new span has not been structured so as to become one of the

principal elements of that structure's lower lateral bracing system. Though it is true that the floor plank of the new Bartonsville Covered Bridge are to be firmly attached to the floor joists which will support them, the floor joists themselves are neither notched where they encounter the bottom chords, nor are they anchored to these chords in any way. The planned floor is therefore condemned to "float" as it were between the two trusses. As long as the tie rods which pass through and between the bottom chords remain intact, the floor will contribute something to the span's lateral stability, but should a significant number of these tie rods fail, either under duress or for other reasons, well, then a great deal could go wrong structurally speaking, and quickly.

Many nineteenth and early twentieth century Bridgewrights perfectly understood the importance of floors as a means of providing effective lower lateral bracing within a Covered Wooden Bridge. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, numerous highway Covered Bridges were erected without formal lower lateral bracing systems. Such omissions did not occur capriciously, nor were they the result of fly-by-night bridgewrights trying to save money on materials. Snow and Fletcher, in their Essay, A History of the Development of Wooden Bridges, twice remark upon the question; to wit: "...the trusses of highway bridges are not of great height so that they seldom suffer from lack of transverse or lateral bracing. Their plank floors, unlike the open floors of railroad bridges, make the best kind of lateral bracing". And again, "Failure of the floor-beams by longitudinal shear is common if they are over-loaded and mortised near their ends for lateral braces.... A well-laid floor is very ample for lateral bracing of a highway bridge."

There is of course much more that could be said regarding certain features of the soon to be erected new Bartonsville Covered Bridge, but in my view, and perhaps in yours as well, the present commentary has gone on long enough. The sad part of the story is that a wonderful opportunity to do something grand and noble over the Williams River in Lower Bartonsville has been missed. It needn't have been, but it was. Let the saga of the reconstruction of the Bartonsville Covered bridge therefore become a cautionary tale for all of us, and most especially for those who happen to be public officials. Though it is a good idea to seek advice upon occasion, an obligation nevertheless remains to verify that the advice one ultimately receives has merit.

Happy Bridging! !

Sincerely,

David W. Wright

## NSPCB Annual Meeting

The Society's Annual Dinner Meeting will be held at 12 noon on Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at David's Tavern at 11 Brown Square in Newburyport, Massachusetts. After the meal and business meeting, we will move to the First Religious Society Church for a presentation about one of the earliest covered bridge builders and Newburyport native, Timothy Palmer (1751-1821). From from 1804 to 1806, Palmer built the earliest documented American covered bridge over the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia. The "Permanent Bridge", as it came to be known, was a continuous three-span arch truss consisting of two 150-foot spans and one 195-foot span. It is recorded that the city bridge committee insisted that the heavy timbers be covered with a roof and siding to preserve and protect the structure from weathering. The presentation will also include a slide show tour of some of the beautiful covered bridges of New England, from all seasons and states.

The architect of the First Religious Society Church is not known for certain. The building contractors were Spofford and Palmer, and Timothy Palmer, may have been the primary architect. Another possibility is Samuel McIntyre of Salem, who is known to have provided the applied plaster ornamentation for the pulpit and galleries, and who a few years later designed a building with a very similar facade and steeple for a church in Salem. Local legend has it that much of the massive structural work was done by shipwrights.

The Palmer presentation is open to the public and we ask you to spread the word to invite others to attend. Full details and a dinner reservation form will be available in the Fall newsletter.

## Upcoming Covered Bridge Meetings & Events

- June 24 National Society Meeting**  
Contoocook Railroad Bridge in Contoocook, NH - Lunch at the pizza shop next to the bridge, meeting at 1:00 p.m. inside the bridge.
- July 8 NY State Covered Bridge Society**  
Picnic at the Shushan Covered Bridge. - Lunch at 12:00 noon, meeting is at 1:00 p.m
- July 15 Ohio Historic Bridge Association**  
Noon Annual Picnic at the Salt Creek Covered Bridge in Muskingum Co.  
The program will be presented by speaker Julie O'Keefe McGhee, "Teller of Tales that weave folklore into our lives"
- July 21 Covered Bridge Society of Oregon**  
1:00 p.m. Meeting & Picnic at the Harris Bridge, Harris Road, Philomath in Benton County. In case of rain, the meeting will be held at the Ritner Covered Bridge.
- July 21 & 22 Indiana Covered Bridge Society**  
Summer Trip to the French Lick Area
- July 22 National Society Meeting & Program**  
1:00 p.m. Theodore Burr Resource Center, located inside the Oxford Public Library, 8 Ft Hill Park, Oxford, NY. Program: Covered Bridges in the Civil War by Bob and Trish Kane
- August 4 A DAY AT THE BRIDGE**  
The Friends of the Medora Covered Bridge and Area (FMCBA) have scheduled A DAY AT THE BRIDGE on Saturday, August 4, 2012. The activities will begin in the morning concluding with a buffet style dinner on the bridge at 6:30 p.m. To purchase tickets, send a check for \$15.00 and self-addressed stamped envelope by July 27<sup>th</sup> to FMCBA, P.O. Box 132, Medora, IN 47260. For more details, visit <http://www.medoracoveredbridge.com/Events.html>.
- August 12 Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania**  
1:00 p.m. Ebenezer Bridge, Mingo Creek Park, Washington County, PA. A meeting at the bridge for a mini bridge tour. Monthly meeting at 2 p.m.
- August 25 Covered Bridge Society of Oregon**  
1:00 p.m. Meeting - Crawfordsville Bridge Day at the Crawfordsville Bridge in Linn County. The event begins at 10:00, Society meeting is at 1:00.
- August 26 National Society Meeting and Picnic**  
Westminster Fire Station, Grout Ave., Westminster, VT. Lunch at Noon, Meeting at 1:00 p.m.
- September 9 NY State Covered Bridge Society**  
11:00 a.m. Meeting & Annual Auction - Hamden Town Hall. You can plan on being there any time after 11 AM and bring whatever you want for lunch. The meeting will start at 1 p.m..
- September 16 National Society Meeting**  
1:00 p.m. Country Cow Restaurant, Blair Road, I-93 exit 27, Campton, NH.  
Join us for lunch at noon and Meeting at 1:00pm.
- September 16 Ohio Historic Bridge Association**  
Fall Tour. Details to be announced.

## Upcoming Covered Bridge Meetings & Events (continued)

### Sept. 21 – 23 Union County (Ohio) Covered Bridge Festival

Village Park, North Lewisburg, OH

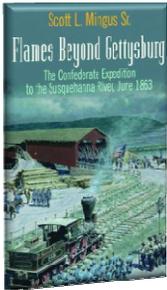
Covered Bridge Tours, Speakers, Presentations, arts and craft, live entertainment, old fashion food, kids activities, quilt show, heritage crafts, re-enactments, hot air balloons and more.

### Sept. 29–30 Indiana Covered Bridge Society

Fall Tour. Dearborn, Fayette and Franklin Counties.

## Attention all Civil War and Covered Bridge Enthusiasts!

If you are a Civil War buff interested in Covered Bridges, you won't want to miss our 1 pm, July 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting at the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center at the Oxford Memorial Library in Oxford, NY. Many of our members will be seeing the Resource Center for the first time which is exciting.



Bob and Trish Kane will join Vicky House, Town and Village of Oxford Historian, for a presentation of *Covered Bridges and the Role They Played in the Civil War*. Join them as they take a unique look at how the bridges were used as encampments, battlegrounds, prisons, barns, hospitals, and how they were destroyed and rebuilt by both sides to further their cause to win the war. And today, what bridges are supposedly haunted by the 'spirits & souls' of the soldiers who died there?



On display will be a wonderful exhibit of covered bridge photos as seen through the eyes of Matthew Brady, famed Civil War photographer, Harper's Weekly, and other artists' renditions, who were there at the time.

Following the program, autographed copies of ***FLAMES BEYOND GETTYSBURG*** by noted author, historian, and tour guide Scott L. Mingus, Sr. will be available. His newest book highlights the burning of the world's longest covered bridge, the Columbia Wrightsville, during the Gettysburg Campaign.

Come early to get a private tour of the Burr Resource Center. For more details and directions, call the Library at: (607) 843-6146 or visit [www.oxfordny.com](http://www.oxfordny.com).

**NOTE:** Please be advised that the Main Street Bridge in Oxford is closed. You will need to take a short, detour route to the Oxford Memorial Library.

## Update on Blount County Alabama Bridges

The three remaining covered bridges of Blount County Alabama had fallen into disrepair over the years. One by one they were closed to traffic while the County officials worked on obtaining the necessary funds to get them back into service. Even after funding became available and design work was completed, other factors continued to delay the project. Now, the repairs are well under way. Sharon Rose Murphree and Susan Sloan Johnson, two of the organizers of "Friends of the Covered Bridges of Blount County", have provided a progress update. A crew of 3-4 is working on the bridges and love the tranquil atmosphere surrounding these bridges. They are hoping the bridges will be completed and open for the Covered Bridge Festival in late October. The Easley and Swann bridges will remain closed until the entire project is complete and all three bridges are inspected.

Easley Bridge (01-05-12):.....Repairs are finished and fire retardant will be applied. The construction crew gained valuable knowledge working on Easley bridge and will use this knowledge to repair the other bridges.

Swann Bridge (01-05-05):.....Repairs are underway. Decking is going down, then new tin will be applied and other repairs made as needed.

Horton Mill Bridge (01-05-07):.....This is the last bridge that will be worked on. No construction at this time.

For more information about "Friends of the Covered Bridges of Blount County", please visit their website at <http://www.friendsofthecoveredbridgesofblountcounty.org/> or contact them at Friends of the Covered Bridges of Blount County, 808 4th Avenue East, Oneonta, AL 35121

### New Bartonsville Bridge

The western abutment of the covered bridge at Bartonsville, Vermont, (45-13-11), which was washed out by Irene, has been repaired and a temporary single-lane steel span has the road open to traffic again. The Town of Rockingham solicited for bids for the replacement covered bridge and received the following proposals:

1. Cold River Bridges, Walpole, NH: \$1,210,210
2. Daniels Construction Ascutney, VT: \$1,219,484
3. Alpine Construction Schuylerville, NY: \$1,240,289.76
4. Wright Construction, Mt Holly NY: \$1,289,411.50
5. Chesterfield Associates, Westhampton Beach, New York: \$1,342,000
6. Barns and Bridge, Gilford, NH: \$1,600,327.87
7. Graton Associates, Inc. Holderness, NH: 2,197,338



In a 4-0 vote, the Rockingham Selectboard awarded the contract for the new Bartonsville covered bridge to Cold River Bridges who will be partnering with Bensonwood Homes of Walpole, NH. NSPCB member Phil Pierce was the engineer on the project during the design phase.

### New Tuscarora Covered Bridge in New York

Arnold Graton is in the process of building a new covered bridge to replace the Tuscarora Bridge (32-13-05) destroyed by Tropical Storm Irene on August 28, 2011. The new bridge will be a kingpost truss. At the time this was written, one truss was up and the other was expected to be raised the following day. The bridge is expected to be completed by the end of June. Most of you already know that the Club which owns the bridge typically does not welcome people on the grounds and that will not change with the new bridge. However, they are having discussions with the New York State Covered Bridge Society to schedule some days when visitors will be allowed on the site. Also, due to the private nature of the Club, we were not able to obtain any photos for publication.

### Bower's Bridge (45-14-11) Receives a New Cover



During Tropical Storm Irene, the southerly abutment of the Bower's or Brownsville Bridge in Brownsville, Vermont, was washed away setting the bridge afloat on a 100-yard journey downstream where it came to rest at a bend in the stream. It was moved back to a spot near the southerly abutment for repairs. New walls and roof now cover the historic tied arch and floor system. The bridge was scheduled to be hoisted back on to its abutments in late April, but a decision to replace the northerly abutment postponed the move. As of June 4<sup>th</sup>, it was still sitting on dry land and the

northerly abutment is being constructed.



### Taftsville Bridge (45-14-12) Update

Tropical Storm Irene damaged the western abutment of the covered bridge at Taftsville, Vermont. To make the repairs, the western span has been removed and put into storage with only the arches remaining. The Taftsville bridge was originally built in 1836 and has a unique combination of Multiple King and Queenpost trusses with four laminated arches added in the early 1900s.

### Back Issues of Covered Bridge Topics

Copies of Covered Bridge Topics, as far back as the early 1960s, are available for \$3 each. Contact Dick Roy to see if the dates you are looking for are available. He can be reached by email at [dickroycb1@comcast.net](mailto:dickroycb1@comcast.net) or at 73 Ash St. #2, Manchester, NH 03104-4906.

## Blenheim Bridge (32-48-01) in New York State

The Blenheim Bridge, constructed in 1855, was one of the covered bridges lost to the flooding that resulted from Tropical Storm Irene in August 2011. These photos were taken by Stephen Kowalski shortly before the bridge was swept away as he and other residents were evacuating the town. Area residents have been scouring the riverbanks



regularly to gather pieces of the structure with the hopes that some of the original material can be incorporated into a new bridge. Unfortunately, the bridge was so completely demolished that most of the pieces are too small to recycle. Carle J. Kopecky, Museum Director of the Old Stone Fort Museum in Schoharie, NY, indicated that they recently recovered a 40-foot section of the bridge.



## Elizabethton Bridge (42-10-01) Celebration



Built in 1882 for \$3,000 the 134-foot Elizabethton Covered Bridge in Elizabethton, Tennessee, was renovated last winter. To celebrate the official reopening of the bridge, the Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony on Thursday, June 7<sup>th</sup>. Chamber of Commerce President Richard Tester, surrounded by county and



city officials, cut the ribbon to kick off Elizabethton's annual 3-day Covered Bridge Festival.

## New Covered Bridge in Ohio



A new covered bridge has been constructed in Preble County, Ohio, to add to the seven historic covered bridges within the county. The Preble County Engineer's Office replaced the structurally deficient, functionally obsolete steel truss bridge on Camden College Corner Road over Four Mile Creek erected in the 1920s. The Hueston Woods Covered Bridge is a single span modified Burr Arch design, covered timber structure with reinforced



concrete foundations and a span of 108 feet. A six-foot covered walkway is located on each side of the bridge to provide a safer area for pedestrian traffic, along with a scenic viewing area of Four Mile Creek. The new structure is located approximately 40 feet to the north of the prior location to improve the horizontal alignment of Camden-College Corner Road and meets FHWA requirements for load carrying capacity and geometrics. The County Engineer's Office is having a Bridge Dedication on June 24<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. All are welcome to attend. Photos provided by the County Engineer's Office.

## Cabin Creek Bridge (17-68-03) To Be Repaired

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet plans to spend approximately \$750,000 to make repairs to the Cabin Creek Covered Bridge in Lewis County. The bridge was bypassed in 1983 and has fallen into serious disrepair.

## Brabant-Philippe Bridge (61-25.c) To Be Rebuilt

On June 12th, the Gatineau (Québec) City Council announced its decision to rebuild the Brabant-Philippe Bridge as a wooden covered bridge. This option, estimated at over one million dollars, was the most expensive of the three alternatives. The Council felt it was important that the new bridge be a covered wooden structure like the one that was recently lost. The original Brabant-Philippe Bridge was built in 2007 by the volunteer Corporation d'aménagement de la Rivière Blanche [White River Development Committee]. It was the first of four bridges planned to serve a bicycle and walking trail in the city. The bridge was lost to arson during the night of December 30-31, 2011. Four teenagers, ages 14 to 17, were arrested for that fire. Councilor Yvon Boucher added that fire retardant will be applied to the new structure and they plan to install a surveillance system. (*Radio Canada, June 12, 2012*)

## Six Lancaster County Bridges to be Repaired

"If you're a covered bridge enthusiast and you want to see bridges being torn apart and put back together, this is the year," said Charlie Douts, director of the county's Facilities Management Department as quoted in a LancasterOnline article by P.J. Reilly on June 10th. The article went on to describe upcoming repairs to six bridges in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The project will fix three bridges damaged by the flooding associated with Tropical Storm Lee on September 8th. The others are receiving routine repairs.

The Seigrist's Mill Covered Bridge (38-36-37), built 1885, floated off its piers during the flood and landed a short distance downstream. It was moved onto the east bank by two cranes where it sits waiting for repairs. Some damaged wood will need to be replaced, but they will preserve as much original material as possible. The approaches are being raised two feet to reduce future flood risks.

The Pinetown Bushong's Mill Covered Bridge (/38-36-05), built 1867, will also be moved off of its abutments to the side of the creek to repair flood damage. Like the Seigrist's Mill bridge, its abutments will be raised two feet. Work on each bridge is expected to cost \$500,000 to \$750,000, with the Federal Emergency Management Agency covering 75 percent of the cost and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency covering the remaining 25 percent, according to Douts. They hope to have all the necessary permits by August and open bids in September.

- Zook's Mill Covered Bridge (38-36-14), built 1849, sustained the least damage of the three. It was pushed four inches off center and is still open to traffic. The bridge will be closed for about two weeks to make repairs. Repairs are estimated at \$125,000, which is expected to be covered by FEMA and PEMA.

The other three bridges will receive new roofs, siding and decking along with repairs to any damaged structural members. Money for those repairs comes from the State's liquid fuels tax. Douts said the county is in the process of soliciting bids from contractors for work on these bridges. That work is expected to begin this summer and last about three to six months.

Work on the Leaman's Place Covered Bridge (38-36-20#2), built 1893, is expected to cost \$350,000.

Work on the Forry's Mill Covered Bridge (38-36-28), built 1869, is expected to cost \$700,000.

Work on the Kauffman's Distillery Covered Bridge (38-36-32#2), built 1874, is expected to cost \$250,000.

## George Conn

On Wednesday, April 11, 2012, the covered bridge community suffered a great loss with the passing of George Conn of Malvern, Pennsylvania. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

George loved covered bridges and photographed more than 700 throughout the country. He belonged to eight covered bridge societies, was a vice president for the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of Pennsylvania, and was a member of the Bartram Bridge Joint Preservation Board. For many years he organized the Pioneer's Covered Bridge Safari dedicated to the memory of Richard Donovan, Richard Sanders Allen and Dick Wilson.

George graduated from Conestoga High School in 1961. He received a bachelor's degree from West Chester University in history ('65) and two master's degrees in elementary and secondary education ('67 and '71). He was a



beloved teacher for the Great Valley School District for 33 years, an avid Phillies fan and a board member and coach with the Chester Valley Little League.

George is survived by his loving wife Tina, four children and six grandchildren.

## NSPCB Facebook Page

For any organization to continue to exist, it must find ways to attract new members who support its goals. To help spread the word, the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges has created a Facebook page. The page will be used for sharing current bridge-related news and Society meeting information. If you use Facebook, visit us at <http://www.facebook.com/nspcb>. "Like" our page and share it with your friends.

## Second National Covered Bridge Conference

Crowne Plaza Dayton Hotel, Dayton, Ohio, June 5-8, 2013

The Federal Highway Administration's National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program (NHCBP) will be sponsoring the Second National Historic Covered Bridge Conference in Dayton, Ohio, June 5-8, 2013. Co-sponsored by the National Park Service's Historic American Engineering Record and the USDA Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory, this event will be held ten years after the First National Covered Bridge Conference in Burlington, Vermont.

The second national conference will follow up on several themes: reviewing several of the NHCBP-funded research and rehabilitation projects, exploring best practices for rehabilitation, and revisiting the Burlington Charter for the Preservation of Covered Bridges. We will also discuss the continuing threats and challenges to covered bridges, most recently illustrated by the flooding in New England from tropical storms Irene and Lee in 2011. These natural disasters resulted in the loss of the Blenheim Bridge, a National Historic Landmark, and damage to several others.

The Dayton Conference will feature presentations from some of the leading covered bridge engineers, scholars, and builders from across the country. The NHCBP invites proposals for papers to be presented at the Second National Historic Covered Bridge Conference. Deadline for proposals: Monday, January 7, 2013. For more information, contact David A. Simmons, Ohio Historical Society, 800 E. 17th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43211-2474; 614-297-2365; [dsimmons@ohiohistory.org](mailto:dsimmons@ohiohistory.org).

## Teaching About Covered Bridges in Our Schools

As part of the **National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation (NHCBP) Program**, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) partnered with the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory (FPL) to prepare an **Educational Guide on the History of Covered Bridges**. The project produced a comprehensive guide and a companion CD with interactive and animated elements on covered bridges in the United States to be used by educators in teaching students in grades K – 12 for math, science, and American history courses. The package contains information appropriately written and formatted in sections for grades K – 5, 6–8, and 9–12. It includes a compilation of all different types and history of covered bridges in the United States. It further includes a pictorial coverage and descriptive drawings including bridge type, year built, design loads, traffic, wood species used, and information on the designer/builder.

For more information on this program, please contact

Ms. Sheila Rimal Duwadi  
Federal highway Administration  
US Department of Transportation  
Research, Development & Technology  
6300 Georgetown Pike  
McLean, VA 22101-2296  
[sheila.duwadi@DOT.gov](mailto:sheila.duwadi@DOT.gov)  
Phone: 202- 493-3106

Please help teach our young people about covered bridges by making your local schools aware that this material is available. Course material can be downloaded from the National Center for Wood Transportation Structures website at [http://www.woodcenter.org/covered\\_bridges\\_education/](http://www.woodcenter.org/covered_bridges_education/)



## Covered Spans of Yesteryear

by Bill Caswell

Welcome to summer and the bridge touring season. I hope you are able to get out and visit a few bridges. In July, Jenn & I will be traveling to New York to attend the NSPCB meeting at the Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Resource Center at the Oxford Library in Oxford, NY. Bob & Trish Kane have prepared a presentation about the role that covered bridges played in the Civil War for New York State Museum Week in early June. They have offered a modified version of that presentation for our meeting on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Please consider joining us if you are able. We are scheduling meetings outside of our usual Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont settings to make them more accessible to members and their guests living in other areas. Last September's meeting in Collinsville, CT was attended by a few Connecticut members and we appreciate their support. We look forward to seeing you in Oxford.

One of the covered bridges that Bob & Trish will be discussing was the one spanning the Susquehanna River between Columbia and Wrightsville, Pennsylvania. The first covered Columbia-Wrightsville Bridge was built in 1813 with twenty-eight Burr Truss spans. The Slaymaker brothers built the masonry and the bridge was built by Jonathan Walcott with the total cost at \$231,771.00. At 5,690', this was the longest covered bridge ever built in the world. The clear span was 5,678', with a 30' double lane roadway, a 14'6" clearance and the height from water was 27'. The crossing would have lined up with the approximate locations of Linden Street in Columbia and Vine Street in Wrightsville. On February 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>, 1832, five spans went out in an ice freshet. Several days later, the entire bridge was swept away.



The second covered Columbia-Wrightsville Bridge was built in 1834 by James Moore at a cost of \$128,726.00 with twenty-six Burr Truss spans. Total length came to 5,620'. The clear span was 5,612', with a 40' double lane roadway, a 20' clearance and the height from water was 25'. It was oriented east-northeast to west-southwest on the line of existing stone piers on the upstream (north) side of the Route 462 (SR0462) multi-arch concrete bridge between Columbia and Wrightsville and about 1,545' downstream from the first Columbia - Wrightsville covered bridge. This is the structure that was destroyed by fire set by the Union Army. After a failed attempt to dynamite the 4th span from the Wrightsville end, Union troops set the bridge afire to prevent Confederate troops from crossing into Lancaster County on Sunday, June 28, 1863.

The Pennsylvania Railroad constructed the third covered Columbia-Wrightsville Bridge in 1869 using the same piers that held the prior structure. This bridge included two wrought iron through truss spans in the center, with the idea of reducing any fire loss by one half. It was built at a cost of \$400,000.00. The twenty-six span Howe Truss with auxiliary arches had a 40' roadway, a 20' clearance and stood 25' above water. The bridge stood until destroyed by a hurricane on September 30, 1896. Every span, except the two iron firebreak spans were thrown down into the river. It was replaced by a two tiered wrought iron bridge on the same piers. The iron bridge stood until dismantled and sold for scrap during the summer of 1964.

Thanks to Thomas Kipphorn who provided the information and picture for this article.

For information about other former covered bridges, visit our website at [www.lostbridges.org](http://www.lostbridges.org). If you have information or pictures of the former bridges in your area, please share that with us. There is still a vast amount of territory to cover and any assistance will be greatly appreciated. Email is usually the most effective way to contact me - [bill@lostbridges.org](mailto:bill@lostbridges.org).

## Updates to the World Guide to Covered Bridges

This section lists updates since the previous newsletter. For a complete list of changes, please visit the website at [www.coveredbridgesociety.org](http://www.coveredbridgesociety.org) and click on the World Guide link.

Page 2, 01-22-01, Clarkson or Legg Bridge, Cullman County, Alabama, revised directions

6.8 miles west of jct I-65 on US278 (Exit 308) then 0.6 miles right on CR1117 and 0.7 miles left on bypassed section of CR1043 in park. (On East side of road). Closed. (NR) N34° 12.47' W086° 59.47'

Page 2, 01-60-01, Alamuchee or Bellamy Bridge, Sumter County, Alabama, correct route number, US1 should be **US11**

Page 2, 01-61-01, Kymulga Bridge, Talladega County, Alabama, revised directions

1.8 miles east of jct US231/280 on AL76, then 3.8 miles left on Forest Hills Drive (CR180), then 3.7 miles right on Kymulga Grist Mill Rd. (CR180) and just left on abandoned road at Kymulga Mill Park North-northeast of Childersburg. Closed. (NR) N33° 20.057' W086° 17.999'

Page 5, 07-04-01#2, Comstock Bridge, Middlesex County, Connecticut, rebuilt and issued a new number

07-04-01#2 East Hampton Salmon River Comstock 1 span 94' **2011** Howe

Page 6, 07-04-P1#2, Comstock Pony Truss, Middlesex County, Connecticut, rebuilt and issued a new number

East Hampton Salmon River Comstock 1 span 36' **2011** Pony Queen

Page 7, 10-08-01, Euharlee Creek Bridge, Bartow County, Georgia, update directions

0.7 miles west of Stilesboro on GA113, then 4 miles right on Covered Bridge Rd. Bridge is on east side of Covered Bridge Rd. Closed. N34° 08.58' W084° 55.87'

Page 10, 10-109-01, Big Clouds Creek Bridge, Oglethorpe County, Georgia, clarify directions

7.2 miles north of jct US78 on GA22, then 1.6 miles left on Smithsonia Rd. then bear right at 'Y' at 0.6 miles, then 0.1 miles right on Chandler/Silver Rd. Southeast of Smithsonia. Rehabilitated 1998. (NR) N33° 59.156' W083° 08.009'

Page 14, 14-08-01, Adams Mill Bridge, Carroll County, Indiana, bridge is no longer closed

Page 101, 38-09-05, South Perkasio Bridge, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, correct coordinates of the bridge to **N40° 22.05' W075° 17.70'**

Page 101, 38-09-10, Cabin Run Bridge, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, correct coordinates of the bridge to **N40° 25.92' W075° 06.75'**

## Recent NSPCB Meetings



The March meeting took place at MoeJoe's Restaurant in Manchester, New Hampshire, with 9 members in attendance. The April meeting was hosted by the Harvard (MA) Historical Society at their facility, the Still River Meetinghouse in Harvard, Massachusetts. The building contains an excellent collection of furniture, household items, photographs and books from Harvard's past. After the business portion of the meeting, Bill Caswell offered a presentation on the covered bridges of Massachusetts using photographs by the late William Maxant, a Harvard resident and long-time NSPCB member. *Bob Watts Photo.*

**Everything You Need To Know About Covered Bridges**  
On a Single Compact Disc

This disc contains a PDF copy of the World Guide as it was published in 2009. However, since that copy cannot be changed, a World Guide file in Word format is included so each copy can be updated. That file is updated as more information is received.

The CD also includes:

- Several files of changes to the various editions of the World Guide.
- A file of Romantic Shelters, i.e. unauthentic bridges. Many changes were made in the latest World Guide that redefined an authentic covered bridge. Those bridges that were reclassified can be found in the Romantic Shelters file.
- An index to all copies of Covered Bridge Topics. This includes a table of contents for each issue, a list of subjects, a list of authors and photographers, poetry and obituaries. This is kept up to date.
- A bibliography of known books that pertain to covered bridges.
- Large sketches of common truss types, and
- A few more miscellaneous files.

Send a check for \$15 made out to Joseph Cohen. \$10 from each sale goes towards the Society's bridge preservation efforts.

From September to March: 210 Wellington F, West Palm Beach, FL 33417-2559

From April to August: 130 Westfield Drive, Holliston, MA 01746-1257

There is another excellent book on Vermont covered bridges called "**Spanning Time: Vermont Covered Bridges**", by Joseph Nelson, who is the President of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society. It is a superb hardbound book containing wonderful color photos, maps and information about each Vermont covered bridge. The book is 7.5 x 9.25 in. and has 271 pages. ISBN 1-881535-25-8 For ordering information contact the author at 2 Sugar Hill Road, Underhill, VT 05489 or on the Web [www.vermontbridges.com](http://www.vermontbridges.com)  
(This book isn't available from the society store).

**Books Available from the Society Store**

Order from Mrs. June Roy, 73 Ash St. #2, Manchester, NH 03104-4906, E-mail: [dickroycb1@comcast.net](mailto:dickroycb1@comcast.net)

**Covered Bridges of Vermont** by Ed Barna,  
6x9 soft cover, 216 pgs., ISBN 0-88150-373-8 ..... Postpaid, \$17.00

**Vermont Covered Bridges** by Joseph D. Conwill,  
Arcadia Press, Images of America Series, 2004,  
6.5x9.25 soft cover, 128 pgs., ISBN 0-7385-3598-2 ..... \$19.99 each plus \$3.00 shipping and handling.

**Books by Andrew Howard**

**C/B's of Madison County IA, A Guide,**  
6x9 format paperback, 46 pgs., ISBN 0-940310-07-4 ..... \$6.50 plus \$2.00 postage and handling

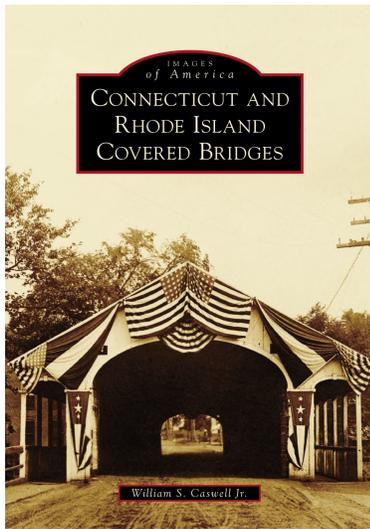
**C/B's of Connecticut, A Guide,**  
6x9 format paperback, 47 pgs., ISBN 0-940310-04-X ..... \$5.50 plus \$2.00 postage and handling

**C/B's of Virginia, A Guide**  
6x9 format paperback, 46 pgs., ISBN 0-940310-08-2 ..... \$6.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling

**C/B's of Bennington County VT, A Guide**  
6x9 format paperback, 49 pgs., ISBN 0-940310-06-6 ..... \$6.50 plus \$2.00 postage and handling

**C/B's of Massachusetts, A Guide**  
6x9 format paperback, 80 pgs., ISBN 0-940310-03-1 ..... \$6.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling

# Connecticut and Rhode Island Covered Bridges

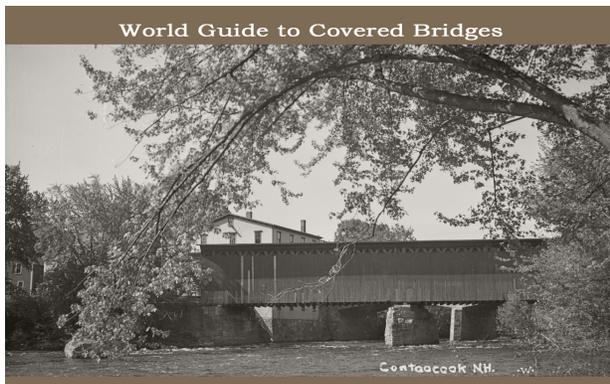


128 pages containing 200 photos and historical notes

During their heyday in the mid- to late 1800s, more than 150 covered bridges dotted the landscape of Connecticut and Rhode Island. Since that time, floods, fires, and progress have claimed almost all of the historic structures. Covered bridges were heavily concentrated in the hills of northwestern Connecticut, spanning the Farmington, Housatonic, and Naugatuck Rivers. In Rhode Island, most were built by the railroads in Woonsocket, Providence, and other communities in the northern part of the state, though few pictures are known to exist. Connecticut was the birthplace of two of the nation's best-known covered bridge designers: Ithiel Town and Theodore Burr. Half of the covered bridges currently standing in the United States are supported by trusses patented by Town or Burr.

Would you like your book(s) autographed? Yes  No

## World Guide to Covered Bridges



2009 Edition

Listing historic and modern wood truss covered bridges in the United States, Canada, and throughout the World.

Questions? email: [bill@lostbridges.org](mailto:bill@lostbridges.org)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Send this form with your check or money order made payable to: Bill Caswell  
 535 Second NH Turnpike  
 Hillsboro, NH 03244

# National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges

## Renewal Notice



**Expires June 30, 2012**

Joe Bridger  
2262 Paddleford Lane  
Anytown, ME 04827

If your address label indicates that your membership is expiring, please renew today to continue receiving Society mailings. You can also renew on-line. Go to <http://coveredbridgesociety.org/> and click on the "Membership Info" link. If you recently sent your renewal form, thank you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State & Zip \_\_\_\_\_

### Optional Information

Your Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthday (month & day) \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Birthday (month & day) \_\_\_\_\_  
Anniversary (month & day) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Membership includes a subscription to *Topics* and the Newsletter.  
The membership year is from July 1 to June 30.

Individual or Family	Student (age 21 or under).....	\$5.00
US Addresses.....	Individual Lifetime.....	\$350.00
Canadian Addresses.....	Couple Life.....	\$400.00
Other Countries.....	Corporate.....	\$1000.00

Membership: .....

### DONATIONS: (Tax Deductible.)

Queenpost Truss .....	\$10.00	Town Lattice .....	\$100.00
Howe Truss .....	\$25.00	Haupt Truss.....	\$150.00
Burr Truss.....	\$50.00	Whipple Truss.....	\$250.00

Make all checks for dues and donations payable to the **N.S.P.C.B. Inc.** and mail to:

Jennifer Caswell  
535 Second NH Turnpike  
Hillsboro, NH 03244

Donation:.....

Total:.....

Do you wish to have a membership card? Yes / No

Optional donations are added to the Eastman-Thomas-Merritt Fund.  
Please help keep the fund afloat for covered bridge preservation.